

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 043959  
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 043959

FOL TEL SENT ACTION BONN INFO SECSTATE FROM USBERLIN DTD 16  
FEB 1978 QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 0380

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, BQG, WB, UR

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS THAT SOVIETS HAVE RETURNED CREDENTIALS OF  
AUSTRALIAN HEAD OF MILITARY MISSION INBERLIN

1. WELT AND MORGENPOST FOR FEBRUARY 15 CARRIED STORIES THAT  
SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV HAD RETURNED CREDENTIALS OF  
AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR LOVEDAY TO FRG AS HEAD OF AUSTRALIAN  
MILITARY MISSION IN BERLIN, FYI - AUSTRALIA MAINTAINS NO  
RESIDENT STAFF IN WEST BERLIN SAVE ONE EMPLOYEE TO ANSWER IN-  
QUIRIES MAINLY CONCERNING EMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA. OFFICER IN  
QUESTION, ONE MRS. PULIVER, REFERS ANY SUBSTANTIVE BUSINESS  
TO AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, BONN.

2. AMBASSADOR LOVEDAY PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS IN CUSTOMARY  
CEREMONIES AT ACA BUILDING IN AMERICAN SECTOR ON JANUARY 25.  
COPIES OF HIS CREDENTIALS WOULD NORMALLY BE PASSED TO SOVIET  
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EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN, BUT THIS HAS NOT REPEAT NOT YET BEEN DONE.

3. FRENCH MISSION HAS RESPONSIBILITY AMONG THE THREE ALLIES  
FOR CONSERVATION OF ORIGINAL COPIES OF CREDENTIALS AND FRENCH  
PROTOCOL OFFICER, MR. SYRIGOS, A VETERAN OF 32 YEARS  
SERVICE IN BERLIN, THEREFORE CIRCULATES COPIES OF THE  
CREDENTIALS TO HIS BRITISH, AMERICAN AND SOVIET

COLLEAGUES. COMMENT: SYRIGOS DOES NOT ALWAYS DO THIS  
IN VERY PROMPT FASHION. END COMMENT.

4. FOR EXAMPLE, ON JANUARY 14, WHEN OTHER BUSINESS  
TOOK HIM TO SOVIET EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN, SYRIGOS  
PERSONALLY HANDED OVER WITHOUT REPEAT WITHOUT ANY COVER-  
ING LETTER, COPIES OF CREDENTIALS PRESENTED BY NORWEGIAN,  
SOUTH AFRICAN AND LUXEMBOURG HEADS OF MILITARY MISSION.  
THE FIRST TWO OF THESE CEREMONIES HAD BEEN IN SEPTEMBER,  
1977, WHILE LUXEMBOURG AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN FORMALLY  
RECEIVED ON JANUARY 17, 1978. SYRIGOS REPORTS  
THAT SOVIET FIRST SECRETARY TYUTYUNOV AT FIRST REFUSED TO  
ACCEPT THE SOUTH AFRICAN CREDENTIALS (APPARENTLY BECAUSE  
OF THE REGIME'S RACIAL POLICIES) FOR REASONS  
WHICH HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH BERLIN. TYUTYUNOV WAS FINALLY  
SWAYED BY ARGUMENT THAT SOVIETS HAD JOINED IN THE INVITA-  
TION TO SOUTH AFRICA TO ESTABLISH A MILITARY MISSION IN  
BERLIN AND THUS SHOULD NOT REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE CREDENTIALS  
OF THE NEW SOUTH AFRICAN HEAD, AMBASSADOR VON SCHIRNDING.  
TYUTYUNOV TOOK THE OCCASION HOWEVER TO DELIVER AN  
OBITER DICTA THAT FOR A CHIEF OF MILITARY MISSION TO  
SERVE CONCURRENTLY AS AMBASSADOR TO BONN REPRESENTED  
"A NEW EFFORT BY THE FRG TO ALTER (POERTER ATTEINTE AU)  
THE STATUS OF BERLIN." AS FAR AS WE KNOW, SYRIGOS MADE NO  
SUBSTANTIVE REPLY TO THIS REMARK.

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5. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, BONN MAY  
HAVE SENT A COPY OF AMBASSADOR LOVEDAY'S CREDENTIALS  
TO SOVIET EMBASSY, EAST BERLIN SINCE CHECKS WITH BRITISH  
AND FRENCH MISSIONS HERE CONFIRM THAT NO ONE IN WEST  
BERLIN HAS YET FORWARDED CREDENTIALS TO SOVIETS.  
EMBASSY MAY WISH TO EXPLORE WITH AUSTRALIANS IN BONN  
AS TO WHAT ACTUALLY HAS HAPPENED. WE WOULD NATURALLY  
BE GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE A COPY OF ANY LETTER OR STATEMENT  
THE SOVIETS MADE IN RETURNING LOVEDAY'S CREDENTIALS.

6. FRENCH MISSION HERE SPECULATES THAT EPISODE CONCERNING  
SOUTH AFRICAN CREDENTIALS MAY HAVE BECOME KNOWN TO PRESS  
BUT IN GARBLED FASHION WHICH LED PRESS TO ATTRIBUTE  
AFFAIR TO AUSTRALIA RATHER THAN SOUTH AFRICA. THIS  
STRIKES US AS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE.

7. TAGESSPIEGEL ON JANUARY 16 CARRIED BRIEF ITEM QUOTING  
"ALLIED SPOKESMAN" WHO SAID THAT THESE MATTERS WERE  
CONCERNS OF THE WESTERN ALLIES BUT NOTED THAT NO CONTACTS  
HAD TAKEN PLACE WITH THE SOVIETS REGARDING AMBASSADOR  
LOVEDAY.

8. WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE PRESS QUERIES ON THIS SUBJECT AND GIVEN ITS LACK OF REAL SENSITIVITY WOULD BE INCLINED TO TELL THE PRESS THAT SINCE THE SOVIET UNION ALONG WITH THE THREE WESTERN POWERS INVITED DIFFERENCT COUNTRIES TO SEND MILITARY MISSIONS TO BERLIN, WE HAVE AS NORMAL PRACTICES SENT THE SOVIET EMBASSY THE LETTERS OF CREDENTIALS OF THE NEW CHIEFS OF MILITARY MISSION. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOT DONE SO YET WITH RESPECT TO AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR LOVEDAY. THIS KIND OF STATEMENT WOULD IN OUR VIEW RESOLVE THE PRESS CONFUSION ON THE SUBJECT; AT LEAST HERE IN BERLIN, THE FRENCH ARE THINKING ALONG THE SAME LINES. GEORGE UNQTE VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 feb 1978  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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